

From the Monastery of the *Theotokos tou Roidiou* to Simanaklay? *Greek and Armenian Cilician Monks in a Changing World*

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All certain information about the monastery of the Mother of God *tou Roidiou* (of the Pomegranate) comes from the writings of the famous monk and canonist Nikon of the Black Mountain (ca. 1025–1110), especially his collection of letters and ecclesiastical rules entitled *Taktikon*.¹ Nikon lived at that monastery for the last years of his life, after the capture of Antioch by the Seljuks in 1084 and the pillage of his previous monastery, St. Symeon Styliste the Younger (the *Thaumaturgos*) on the Wondrous Mount.² Even

though he remained a simple monk, Nikon enjoyed de facto authority as the spiritual leader of his community, but not as its *hegoumenos*.³ The area around the monastery was populated by the Chalcedonian Armenians (*Tzatoi*), in favor of whom Nikon and other local religious leaders wrote to Patriarch Euthymios of Jerusalem in the late eleventh century.⁴ The community itself contained enough *Tzatoi* that an Armenian priest came to the monastery from time to time to celebrate the divine mysteries.⁵

Conventionally, the Roidion monastery is placed on the Black Mountain (ancient Amanos, modern Nur Dağları), a mountain range that lies between the Pyramos (modern Ceyhan) and Orontes (modern Asi) rivers, running from Marash (modern Kahramanmaraş) to Samandağ (near ancient Seleucia Pieria). Its precise location, however, has not yet been identified.⁶ For this reason, the present paper aims to collect and interpret the data concerning Nikon's monastery and to suggest an appropriate solution concerning its location.

1 On Nikon of the Black Mountain, see I. Doens, “Nicon de la Montagne Noire,” *Byzantion* 24 (1954): 131–40; J. Nasrallah, “Un auteur du XI^e siècle: Nicon de la Montagne Noire (vers 1025–début du XII^e s.),” *PrOC* 19 (1969): 150–61; T. Giankou, *Nίκων ὁ Μαυροπετῆς: Βιος–συγγραφικό ἔργο–κανονική διδασκαλία* (Thessaloniki, 1991); A. Kazhdan, “Nikon of the Black Mountain,” *ODB* 3:1484–85; C. Hannick, “Einleitung,” in *Das Taktikon des Nikon vom Schwarzen Berge*, *Monumenta Linguae Slavicae Dialecti Veteris* 62, ed. C. Hannick, 2 vols. (Freiburg, 2014), 1:xxv–liv.

2 On this monastery, see J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Itinéraires archéologiques dans la région d'Antioche: Recherches sur le monastère et sur l'iconographie de S. Syméon Styliste le Jeune*, Bibliothèque de Byzantion 4 (Brussels, 1967), 67–135; J. Nasrallah, “Couvents de la Syrie du Nord portant le nom de Siméon,” *Syria* 49.1–2 (1972): 127–59, at 132–54; W. Djobadze, *Archaeological Investigations in the Region West of Antioch on-the-Orontes*, Forschungen zur Kunstgeschichte und Christliche Archäologie 13 (Stuttgart, 1986), 57–115; K.-P. Todt, *Region und griechisch-orthodoxes Patriarchat von Antiocheia in mittelbyzantinischer Zeit und im Zeitalter der Kreuzzüge (969–1204)*, Habil. Thesis, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden, 1998), 2:921–26; K.-P. Todt and B. A. Vest, *Syria (Syria Prôtē, Syria Deutera, Syria Euphratēsia)*, *TIB* 15, 3 vols. (Vienna, 2014), 2:1768–75; B. Caseau and C. Messis, “Saint

Syméon Styliste le Jeune et son héritage au XI^e–XII^e siècle,” *Byzantina Symmeikta* 31 (2021): 241–80.

3 Nikon, *Taktikon* 23.10 (Hannick, ed., *Das Taktikon* [hereafter Hannick], 2:686), 23.25 (2:695), 40.14 (2:988). See also Hannick, “Einleitung,” lii–liv.

4 Nikon, *Taktikon* 35–36 (Hannick 2:876–96). See Giankou, *Nίκων*, 140–41.

5 Nikon, *Taktikon* 40.14 (Hannick 2:988).

6 Giankou, *Nίκων*, 51–52, 168; Todt, *Region*, 2:933–34; Todt and Vest, *Syria*, 2:1830.

In this respect, a careful reading of Nikon's texts appears to be the first desideratum. In the letters he sent during his stay at the Roidion monastery, there is mention of several names of clergymen and laypeople, who will be discussed in the first two sections of this paper. Among these names, I will first focus on Samuel of Adana, before turning to an unidentified Melkite Marapas, mentioned by Nikon as the leader of the region where the monastery was located. This name is not completely unknown to Byzantinists, as it can be found on some lead seals from that period, and moreover is mentioned in a twelfth-century Armenian chronicle. This hint will be fully exploited to locate the Roidion monastery in Cilicia, in the region of the fortress Anazarbos.

Another research path, discussed in the third section, concerns the numerous pilgrims and travelers who visited this monastery. This would have required the presence of an important pilgrim or commercial road nearby, which will be identified as the main strategic and pilgrim road crossing the region from the Cilician to the Amanian Gates. The monastery of Nikon was likely situated in Western or Eastern Cilicia, toward the Taurus Mountains or Amanos.

The fourth and final section of the paper will investigate data related to the monastery's history after the death of Nikon. Did it continue to exist in the twelfth century? Here I will explore the possibility that it came under Latin or Armenian control and was known by another name. The task will be to check the non-Byzantine monasteries attested at that time and identify common points with Nikon's monastery.

The paper's focus will be on the Armenian monastery called Simanaklay, which contained a rich Greek library in the second half of the twelfth century and was situated in Eastern Cilicia, surely close to the castle bearing the same name. Could this monastery be identified with the residence of Nikon? Several arguments support this suggestion. One is the meaning of "Simanaklay," which in Armenian is "fortress of Symeon." This unusual name will be correlated not with an important person of that time but with Symeon the Thaumaturgos, the patron saint of Nikon's previous monastery. This clue, along with others, will allow us to better envisage the history of Nikon's residence in that period of transition.

Before beginning the analysis, it is worth mentioning briefly that in the first decades of the thirteenth

century, the geographer Yāqūt al-Hamawī mentioned a monastery called Dayr Rummānīn, which means "Monastery of the Pomegranates," situated near Sarmadā, halfway between Antioch and Aleppo (see fig. 1). It has been identified as the monastery of Turmānīn, 10 km northeast of Sarmadā and 15 km south of the famous fortified monastery of St. Symeon Stylite the Elder (Qal'at Sim'ān).⁷

Could Dayr Rummānīn/Turmānīn be connected with Nikon's residence? Even if the Armenians populated this region from the late eleventh century onward⁸ and the main road joining Antioch and Aleppo lay south of the monastery, it is difficult to envisage any link with the monastery of Nikon. Dayr Rummānīn was located in a region ruled in the eleventh century by the emirs of Aleppo. At that time, the natural border between the Byzantine Empire and the emirate was the Limestone Massif, a difficult-to-cross highland region. The last Byzantine castle that secured the road to Aleppo was Artah (modern Reyhanlı, 35 km northeast of Antioch), situated 15 km northwest of Sarmadā. Even the possession of this fortress was not especially secure, however, with Artah passing from the hands of the Byzantines into those of the Muslims and back in the 1060s.⁹ At the time of the First Crusade, Artah and Hārim,¹⁰ situated nearby, were controlled by the

7 On Dayr Rummānīn/Turmānīn, see R. Dussaud, *Topographie historique de la Syrie antique et médiévale* (Paris, 1927), 222; G. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques de la Syrie du Nord*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1953–58), 1:127–29, 155–58; Todt and Vest, *Syria*, 2:1102–3. On the monastery of St. Symeon Stylite the Elder, destroyed in 983 and 1017 by the Muslims after brief Byzantine rule in the late tenth century, see Tchalenko, *Villages antiques*, 1:223–76; J. Nasrallah, "Le couvent de Saint Siméon l'Alépin: Témoignages littéraires et jalons sur l'histoire," *Parole de l'Orient* 1 (1970): 327–56; Todt and Vest, *Syria*, 2:1812–18. On Melkite monasteries situated east of Antioch, see Todt, *Region*, 2:916–21; J. Glyrias, "Syriac Melkite Monasticism at Mount Sinai in the 13th–14th Centuries," *Aram* 31 (2019): 7–33, at 17–18.

8 S. B. Dadoyan, "The Armenian Intermezzo in Bilād al-Shām between the Fourth/Tenth and Sixth/Twelfth Centuries," in *Syrian Christians under Islam: The First Thousand Years*, ed. D. R. Thomas (Leiden, 2001), 159–83, at 179–80; G. Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens entre Grecs, Musulmans et Croisés: Étude sur les pouvoirs arméniens dans le Proche-Orient méditerranéen (1068–1150)*, 2 vols. (Lisbon, 2003), 2:849–60.

9 Todt, *Region*, 2:563–64; T. S. Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch, 1098–1130* (Woodbridge, UK, 2000), 24–26; Todt and Vest, *Syria*, 1:214–17, 2:889–92.

10 Todt, *Region*, 2:564–65; S. Ory, "Hārim," *EI²* 3:208–9; Asbridge, *Creation*, 28–30; Todt and Vest, *Syria*, 2:1244–50.

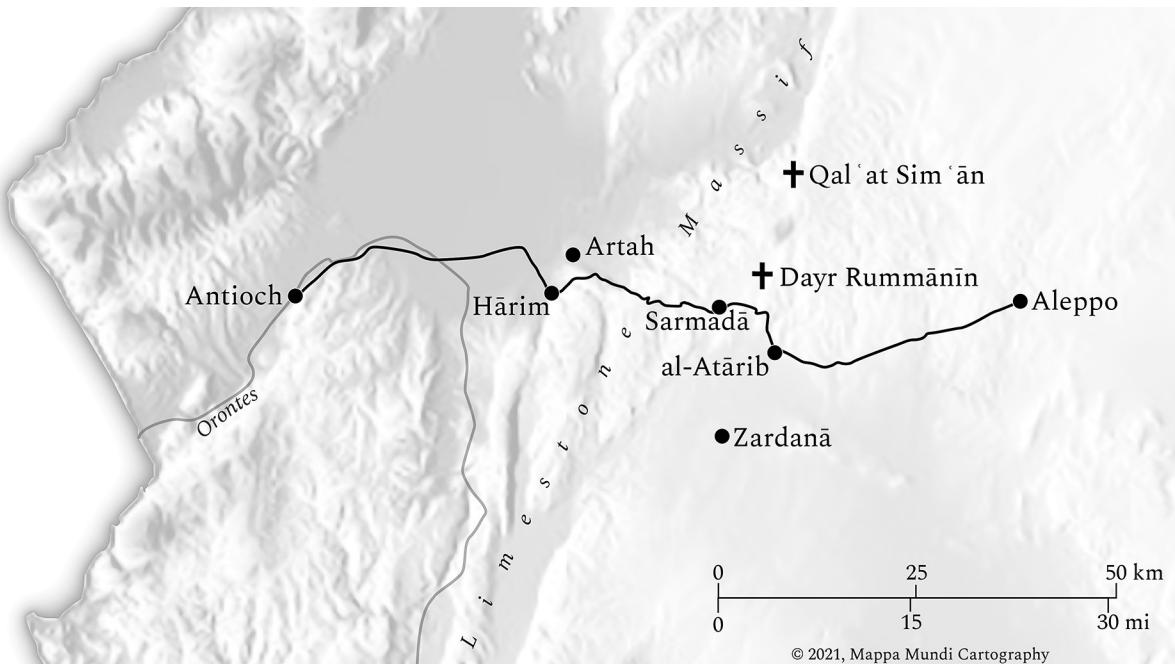


Fig. 1. Fortresses and monasteries in the region between Antioch and Aleppo, eleventh to thirteen centuries. Map by Mappa Mundi Cartography

Seljuks. On the other side of the Limestone Massif, toward Aleppo, there is no trace of Byzantine leadership of the main fortresses Sarmadā,¹¹ al-Atārib,¹² and Zardanā¹³ in the eleventh century. Ruled after 1084 by the Uqaylid and Seljuk emirs of Aleppo, the province around Dayr Rummānīn held no attraction for Greek monks and thus there was no reason for Nikon to move there. The Latin domination began only after the capture of Antioch in 1098, but the region remained a site of permanent conflict and war: in 1119 the Crusaders, led by Roger of Salerno, were defeated at the battle of the Field of Blood, near Sarmadā.¹⁴ In short, Dayr Rummānīn/Turmānīn and the monastery of Nikon simply shared a similar name.

In fact, monasteries with names containing the word “pomegranate” were not uncommon at that time. In Cyprus, not very far from Paphos, the monastery of the Mother of God *Chrysoroyiatissa*, or “of the

Golden Pomegranate,” was founded in the mid-twelfth century.¹⁵ The names likely come from icons of the Mother of God with a pomegranate, a symbol of both fertility and sacrifice, a widespread motif in Christian art long before the famous paintings of Fra Angelico and Botticelli.¹⁶

Adana

Turning now to Nikon’s *Taktikon*, it is worth noting that some names are mentioned in relation to the ministry of teaching (*διακονία τοῦ διδασκαλίου*) the Scriptures

¹⁵ B. Hamilton and A. Jotischky, *Latin and Greek Monasticism in the Crusader States* (Cambridge, 2020), 342.

¹⁶ At the monastery of Koutsovendis, in Northern Cyprus, founded in the late eleventh century, there are several leafy rinceaux containing pomegranates; see C. Mango, E. J. W. Hawkins, and S. Boyd, “The Monastery of St. Chrysostomos at Koutsovendis (Cyprus) and Its Wall Paintings. Part I: Description,” *DOP* 44 (1990): 63–94, at 74, 76; M. G. Parani, “On the Fringe: The Painted Ornament of the Holy Trinity Chapel at Koutsovendēs, Cyprus,” *Zograf* 44 (2020): 59–78, at 64, 66–67. On the links between this monastery and Nikon of the Black Mountain, see T. Papacostas, “History and Architecture of Saint John Chrysostomos at Koutsovendis, Cyprus,” *DOP* 61 (2007): 25–156, at 33–38.

¹¹ Tchalenko, *Villages antiques*, 1:121–24; Todt and Vest, *Syria*, 2:1704–5.

¹² Asbridge, *Creation*, 65–67; Todt and Vest, *Syria*, 2:1463–67.

¹³ Asbridge, *Creation*, 51, 65–67; Todt and Vest, *Syria*, 2:1878–80.

¹⁴ Asbridge, *Creation*, 74–81.

assigned to the monk by Patriarch Theodosios III Chrysoberges of Antioch (1057–1059).¹⁷ At some point after 1084 and probably before 1089, this mission was reconfirmed in a document (*το προτρεπτικὸν χαρτίον*) sent from the Patriarchate to Nikon.¹⁸ It is not clear whether Nikon had requested it to justify his activity and reinforce his spiritual leadership of the Roidion monastery, or whether it was on the initiative of the Patriarchate to use Nikon's knowledge and experience in a mixed Greek-Armenian milieu. The document was first sent to Metropolitan Samuel of Adana¹⁹ and then to a monk called Kosmas,²⁰ both of whom were in contact with Nikon.

Samuel of Adana was the translator into Greek of the Arabic *Life* of John of Damascus, written in 1085 by the monk Michael from the monastery of Symeon Stylite the Younger.²¹ This translation was later used by Ephrem Mtsire, a former monk in the same monastery, for his Georgian version of the text.²² As for the

¹⁷ Nikon, *Taktikon* 31.4–5 (Hannick 2:812; W. J. Aerts, trans., “Nikon of the Black Mountain, Witness to the First Crusade? Some Remarks on His Person, His Use of Language and His Work, Named *Taktikon*, esp. Logos 31,” in *East and West in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean: Antioch from the Byzantine Reconquest until the End of the Crusader Principality*, vol. 1, ed. K. N. Ciggaar and M. Metcalf, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 147 [Leuven, 2006], 125–69, at 144–46).

¹⁸ Nikon, *Taktikon* 41 (Hannick 2:990–94). See Giankou, *Nίκων*, 52–53, 138–39.

¹⁹ Nikon, *Taktikon* 36.14 (Hannick 2:888), 40.5 (2:982).

²⁰ Nikon, *Taktikon* 33.4 (Hannick 2:850), 36.15 (2:888).

²¹ B. Flusin, “De l’arabe au grec, puis au géorgien: Une *Vie* de saint Jean Damascène,” in *Traduction et traducteurs au Moyen Âge*, ed. G. Contamine, *Documents, études et répertoires* 54 (Paris, 1989), 51–61; A. Treiger, “Michael al-Sim ‘ānī,” in *Christian–Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, vol. 5, ed. D. Thomas and A. Mallett (Leiden, 2013), 655–64.

²² Both Nikon and Ephrem Mtsire used the same documents concerning the history of the Georgian Church; see Nikon, *Taktikon* 31.19 (Hannick 2:824; Aerts, “Nikon of the Black Mountain,” 166), 37.8 (2:904); Ephrem Mtire, *Report on the Conversion of the Georgians* 2–3 (B. Martin-Hisard, trans., “L’Église géorgienne et Antioche d’après un moine géorgien de la seconde moitié du XI^e siècle,” in *Vaticana et Medievalia: Études en l’honneur de Louis Duval-Arnould*, ed. J. M. Martin, B. Martin-Hisard, and A. Paravicini Baglioni, *Millennio Medievale* 71 [Florence, 2008], 323–51, at 343–44); B. Martin-Hisard, “La Vie de Georges l’Hagiorite (1009/1010–29 juin 1065),” *REB* 64–65 (2006–7): 5–204, at 162–68. On Ephrem Mtsire, see also W. Djebadze, *Materials for the Study of Georgian Monasteries in the Western Environs of Antioch on the Orontes*, CSCO 372, Subsidia 48 (Leuven, 1976), 100–3.

monk Kosmas, a disciple of a recluse named Romanos, we know that he lived close to Nikon's monastery, since they often discussed ecclesiastical matters. Kosmas also served as an intermediary between Nikon and other persons and monasteries.²³

The fact that this document was not sent directly to Nikon but through intermediaries raises the question of the distance between Antioch and the Roidion monastery. Nothing is known about the dwelling place of Samuel of Adana after 1084. His literary links with monks living near Antioch do not prove a permanent residence in this area, as he could have remained at Adana or retired to a monastery of his diocese. In this case, could Nikon's monastery be placed in the region of Adana, located 200 km northwest of Antioch, or more generally in Cilicia, on the far side of the Black Mountain? Adana would therefore have linked Antioch and Nikon's residence more easily, probably by sea, especially if the roads on land were unsafe. This hypothesis is worth taking into account for one further reason. Nikon asserted for his residence the status of patriarchal monastery (*stauropegion*),²⁴ a title that would be used only if it were located in another bishopric of the Patriarchate. The question remains puzzling, but it seems that either the monastery was situated far enough from Antioch, or the access was sufficiently difficult, to require intermediary persons and locations.

Marapas

Another element that can support this investigation is the identification of the monastery's protector or ruler, named Marapas (*Μαραπάς*). Nikon sent Marapas three letters,²⁵ which can be dated after 1088/1089.²⁶ This Marapas had misappropriated the revenues of the monastery in his own interest, in a manner comparable

²³ Nikon, *Taktikon* 7 (Hannick 1:280), 12.1 (1:348), 29.1 (2:764), 33.1–4 (2:850). See Giankou, *Nίκων*, 104, 125.

²⁴ Nikon, *Taktikon* 20.8 (Hannick 1:590).

²⁵ Nikon, *Taktikon* 23–25 (Hannick 2:682–712). See also Hannick, “Einleitung” (see n. 1), xliv.

²⁶ In Letter 23, Nikon mentioned his previous Letter 20, which had been written after 1088/1089, since it referred to Nikon's Small Book (*τὸ Μικρὸν βιβλίον*), finished in 1088, and “our holy patriarch,” probably John Oxeites, elected in 1089. See Nikon, *Taktikon* 20.1–2 (Hannick 1:586), 23.24 (2:696). See also Giankou, *Nίκων*, 139–41; Hannick, “Einleitung,” xxxi–xxxii.

to that of the *charistikarioi*.²⁷ He was not a simple administrator of the monastery, however, but a local ruler, a *magistros* and *archon of archons / lord of lords* (μάγιστρος καὶ ἄρχων τῶν ἀρχόντων), with Nikon sometimes addressing him as “your lordship” (ἡ ἔξουσία σου).²⁸

Some Byzantine lead seals from the eleventh to twelfth centuries containing the name Marapas have been preserved. They belonged to Michael²⁹ and Demetrios Marapas.³⁰ The seals of Theocharistos, *dishypatos* (eleventh century),³¹ and Symeon, *protospatharios epi tou Chrysotriklinou* (eleventh century),³² belonged either to the Marapai or Marachai. This second family is known through the seals of Michael, *protospatharios epi tou Chrysotriklinou* (eleventh/twelfth century),³³ George, *proedros* (eleventh/twelfth century),³⁴ Manuel

(twelfth century),³⁵ and Thomas (twelfth century)³⁶ Marachas.³⁷

The seal of Symeon Marapas/Marachas, found in Cyprus, deserves special attention because its obverse contains the bust of St. Symeon the Styliste sitting on his column. The same saint is found on the seal of the *vestes* Symeon Antiochos, who might be identified as the physician Symeon Seth from Antioch,³⁸ and on that of a certain Aetios, probably *strategos* of Thessaloniki.³⁹ Despite this evidence, the image is particularly unusual for laypeople, who did not often include St. Symeon the Styliste among their preferences, even when they bore this name.⁴⁰ The seals containing this icon often belong to either the monastery of St. Symeon on the Wondrous Mount⁴¹—even if it is not always easy to distinguish between the stylites Symeon the Elder and Symeon

27 Nikon, *Taktikon* 23.6 (Hannick 2:684). See Giankou, *Nikouv*, 117–18.

28 Nikon, *Taktikon* 23.3 (Hannick 2:682), 23.5 (2:684), 23.7 (2:684). See P. Plank, “Regesten,” in *Das Taktikon*, ed. Hannick (see n. 1), 2:1009–1196, at 1120.

29 V. Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux de l'Empire byzantin*, V: *L'Église*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1963–72), 1:617, no. 800; cf. W. Seibt, “Review of V. Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux de l'Empire byzantin*, V/1–3,” *Bsl* 35 (1974): 73–84, at 80 (Μαραπᾶ); C. Stavrakos, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel mit Familiennamen aus der Sammlung des numismatischen Museums Athens*, Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik 4 (Wiesbaden, 2000), 254–55, no. 161 (Μαραπᾶ).

30 K. M. Konstantopoulos, *Βυζαντικὰ μολυβδόβουλλα τοῦ ἐν Αρήναις Εὐθύνου Νομισματικοῦ Μουσείου* (Athens, 1917), 358, no. 657β; V. Laurent, *Les bulles métriques dans la sigillographie byzantine* (Athens, 1932), 146, no. 410; Stavrakos, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel mit Familiennamen*, 253–54, no. 160; A.-K. Wassiliou-Seibt, *Corpus der byzantinischen Siegel mit metrischen Legenden*, Wiener Byzantinische Studien 28.1–2, 2 vols. (Vienna, 2011–16), 2:564, no. 2580 (Μαραπᾶ).

31 W. Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel in Österreich*, vol. 1 (Vienna, 1978), 238–39, no. 109 (Μαρα[πᾶ]). The condition of the seal does not allow a sure reading.

32 O. Karagiorgou, “Nine Seals Worth Ninety”: Sigillographic Finds from Polis Chrysochous, Cyprus,” *SBS* 12 (2016): 47–69, at 60–61, no. 6 (Μαρα).

33 J.-C. Cheynet, “Sceaux byzantins des musées d’Antioche et de Tarse,” *TM* 12 (1994): 391–478, at 403–4, no. 21; J.-C. Cheynet, E. Erdoğan, and V. Prigent, “Les sceaux byzantins du musée de Gaziantep,” *REB* 78 (2020): 5–69, at 9–11.

34 Wassiliou-Seibt, *Corpus der byzantinischen Siegel*, 2:652, no. 2763.

35 Wassiliou-Seibt, *Corpus der byzantinischen Siegel*, 1:257, no. 541.

36 Wassiliou-Seibt, *Corpus der byzantinischen Siegel*, 1:426, no. 956.

37 For the Late Byzantine period, see *PLP* nos. 16828–29.

38 Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel*, 232–33, no. 105; M. Loukaki, “Contribution à l'étude de la famille Antiochos,” *REB* 50 (1992): 185–205, at 194. On Symeon Seth, who is mentioned with the titles of *vestes* and *magistros*, see M. Cronier, A. Guardasole, C. Magdalaine, and A. Pietrobelli, “Galen en procès à Byzance: L'Antirrhétique de Syméon Seth,” *Galenos* 9 (2015): 71–121, at 86 and n. 77; P. Bouras-Vallianatos and S. Xenophontos, “Galen's Reception in Byzantium: Symeon Seth and His Refutation of Galenic Theories on Human Physiology,” *GRBS* 55 (2015): 431–69, at 437 and n. 21.

39 V. Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux de l'Empire byzantin*, II: *L'administration centrale* (Paris, 1981), 273, no. 547.

40 The seal of Symeon Makrembolites (eleventh/twelfth century) contains the image of a stylite, but its identification with Symeon the Styliste seems uncertain. One of the Makrembolitai had links with the stylite Lazaros of Mount Galesion. See H. Hunger, “Die Makremboliten auf byzantinischen Bleisiegeln und in sonstigen Belegen,” *SBS* 5 (1998): 1–28, at 21, no. 15; A. Kazhdan, “Makrembolites,” *ODB* 2:1272; *Life of Lazaros of Galesion* 101 (H. Delehaye, ed., *AASS Nov.*, 3:508–88, at 539; R. P. H. Greenfield, trans., *The Life of Lazaros of Mt. Galesion: An Eleventh-Century Pillar Saint*, Byzantine Saints' Lives in Translation 3 [Washington, DC, 2000], 191–92 and n. 442).

41 Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux*, V, 2:390–91, nos. 1559b, 1560; J.-C. Cheynet, C. Morrisson, and W. Seibt, *Les sceaux byzantins de la collection Henri Seyrig* (Paris, 1991), 192, no. 288; *DOSeals*, 5:33–34, nos. 10.1–2; E. Stepanova, “Pechati i evlogii monastyrya Svyatogo Simeona Stolnika Mladshego (Seals and Eulogiai of the Monastery of St. Symeon Styliste the Younger),” *Antichnaya drevnost' i srednie veka (Antiquity and the Middle Ages)* 45 (2017): 99–112, at 103–4.

the Younger⁴²—or its monks.⁴³ In these conditions, it appears that Symeon Marapas/Marachas could have a special devotion to St. Symeon the Thaumaturgos. It is also worth noting that the seal of Michael Marachas circulated in the region of Antioch, which indicates that the Marachai had some links with this area.

The titles *magistros* and *archon of archons* used by Nikon for Marapas evidently refer to an important person of the region. At that time, the Byzantines attributed these titles to foreign (mainly Armenian but also Georgian, Syrian, and Arab) governors of major cities or regions of the Eastern provinces. This was the case for Apnelgaripes/Apollarib, *magistros* and ruler of Tarsos and the Cilician plain between 1072 and 1078;⁴⁴ Symbatios/Smbat, *magistros* of Mamistra (ancient Mopsuestia) in the second half of the eleventh century;⁴⁵ Krakurtas, *archon of archons* probably in Tarsos in the same period;⁴⁶ and Tatul, *archon of archons* (*ichkan ichkanats*) and governor of Marash between 1097 and 1104.⁴⁷

⁴² On the two stylites Symeon and the seals and *eulogiai* containing their images, see Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Itinéraires* (see n. 2), 140–58, 169–217; J.-P. Sodini, “Remarques sur l’iconographie de Syméon l’Alépin, le premier stylite,” *Monuments et mémoires de la Fondation Eugène Piot* 70 (1989): 29–53; A. Kazhdan and N. P. Ševčenko, “Symeon the Stylite the Elder,” *ODB* 3:1985–86; A. Kazhdan and N. P. Ševčenko, “Symeon the Stylite the Younger,” *ODB* 3:1986–87; J. Cotsonis, “The Contribution of the Byzantine Lead Seal to the Study of the Cult of the Saints (Sixth–Twelfth Century),” *Byzantion* 75 (2005): 383–497, at 473–75.

⁴³ See Stepanova, “Pechati,” 104–5 (St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, M-6278, eleventh century) for the seal of John, monk on the Wondrous Mount. The image of St. Symeon Stylite was also chosen for their seals by the monks Bartholomew (eleventh century) (see G. Zacos and J. W. Nesbitt, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, vol. 2 [Bern, 1984], 367–68, no. 793; Stepanova, “Pechati,” 105) and Symeon Chalitiotes (eleventh century) (see Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux*, V, 3:275, no. 2001). There is no evidence that these two monks lived in the monastery of St. Symeon Stylite the Thaumaturgos.

⁴⁴ Zacos and Nesbitt, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, 211, no. 362; Cheynet, Morrisson, and Seibt, *Les sceaux byzantins*, 43–44, no. 40; Cheynet, “Sceaux byzantins des musées d’Antioche et de Tarse,” 401–2, no. 18. See also Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens* (see n. 8), 1:307–19.

⁴⁵ Cheynet, “Sceaux byzantins des musées d’Antioche et de Tarse,” 423–24, no. 55.

⁴⁶ Zacos and Nesbitt, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, 279–80, no. 542; Cheynet, “Sceaux byzantins des musées d’Antioche et de Tarse,” 427–8, no. 59.

⁴⁷ Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle* 2.133 (A. E. Dostourian, trans., *Armenia and the Crusades, Tenth to Twelfth Centuries: The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa* [Lanham, MD, 1993], 176); J.-C. Cheynet,

Although the Greek sources offer no other information about the Marapai, this name can be found twice in an Armenian text of that period. Werner Seibt has already noted that Marapa (or Maraba, according to the Eastern or Western Armenian dialect) appears in the *Chronicle* of Matthew of Edessa.⁴⁸ The first mention is related to Constantin I (1093–1100), the second Armenian prince of the dynasty of Rubenids, who “occupied the Taurus Mountains in the territory of Kopitar, situated in the district of Marapa [Մարպասպա].”⁴⁹ The second mention refers to the year 1111, when the Seljuks “penetrated the territory of Anazarba, ravaging the entire area, including Marpa.”⁵⁰ The fortress Kopitar/Gobidar was the first important castle conquered by Ruben I (1073–1092), father of Constantine. It is now identified with Bostan Kalesi (modern Ergenuşağı), 70 km northwest of Anazarbos, near the confluence of the Saros (modern Seyhan) and Zamanti rivers.⁵¹ Vahka (modern Eski Feke), the main fortress of Constantine, was situated in the same area, 70 km north of Anazarbos.⁵² Since the land of Constantine and his son Thoros I (1000–1029) lay in 1108 in Northern Cilicia, between the Saros and Pyramos rivers,⁵³ the region of Marapa(s) can be located with

“Thathoul, archonte des archontes,” *REB* 48 (1990): 233–42. See also Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 2:937–51.

⁴⁸ Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel* (see n. 31), 239.

⁴⁹ Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle* 2.113 (Dostourian, *Armenia and the Crusades*, 166). See also T. Andrews, *Mattēos Urhayec’i and His Chronicle: History as Apocalypse in a Crossroads of Cultures*, The Medieval Mediterranean 108 (Leiden, 2017), 67, n. 83: “Constantin . . . ruled the Taurus mountain from the land of Kopitar to Marapa.”

⁵⁰ Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle* 3.49 (Dostourian, *Armenia and the Crusades*, 206).

⁵¹ L. M. Alishan, *Sissouan ou l’Arméno-Cilicie* (Venice, 1899), 167; R. W. Edwards, *The Fortifications of Armenian Cilicia*, DOS 23 (Washington, DC, 1987), 94–98; F. Hild and H. Hellenkemper, *Kilikien und Isaurien*, TIB 5 (Vienna, 1990), 309–10; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:378–79; S. Grigoryan, “The Location of Drazark, Burial Place of the Kings and Queens of Armenia and of the ‘Blessed Rubenians,’” *Handes Amsarya* 131 (2017): 61–84.

⁵² Alishan, *Sissouan*, 172–73; J. G. Dunbar and W. W. M. Boal, “The Castle of Vahga,” *Anatolian Studies* 14 (1964): 175–84; H. Hellenkemper, *Burgen der Kreuzritterzeit in der Grafschaft Edessa und im Königreich Kleinarmenien: Studien zur Historischen Siedlungsgeographie Südost-Kleinasiens* (Bonn, 1976), 217–23; Edwards, *Fortifications*, 259–65; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 207–8; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:392–95.

⁵³ Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:439–42.

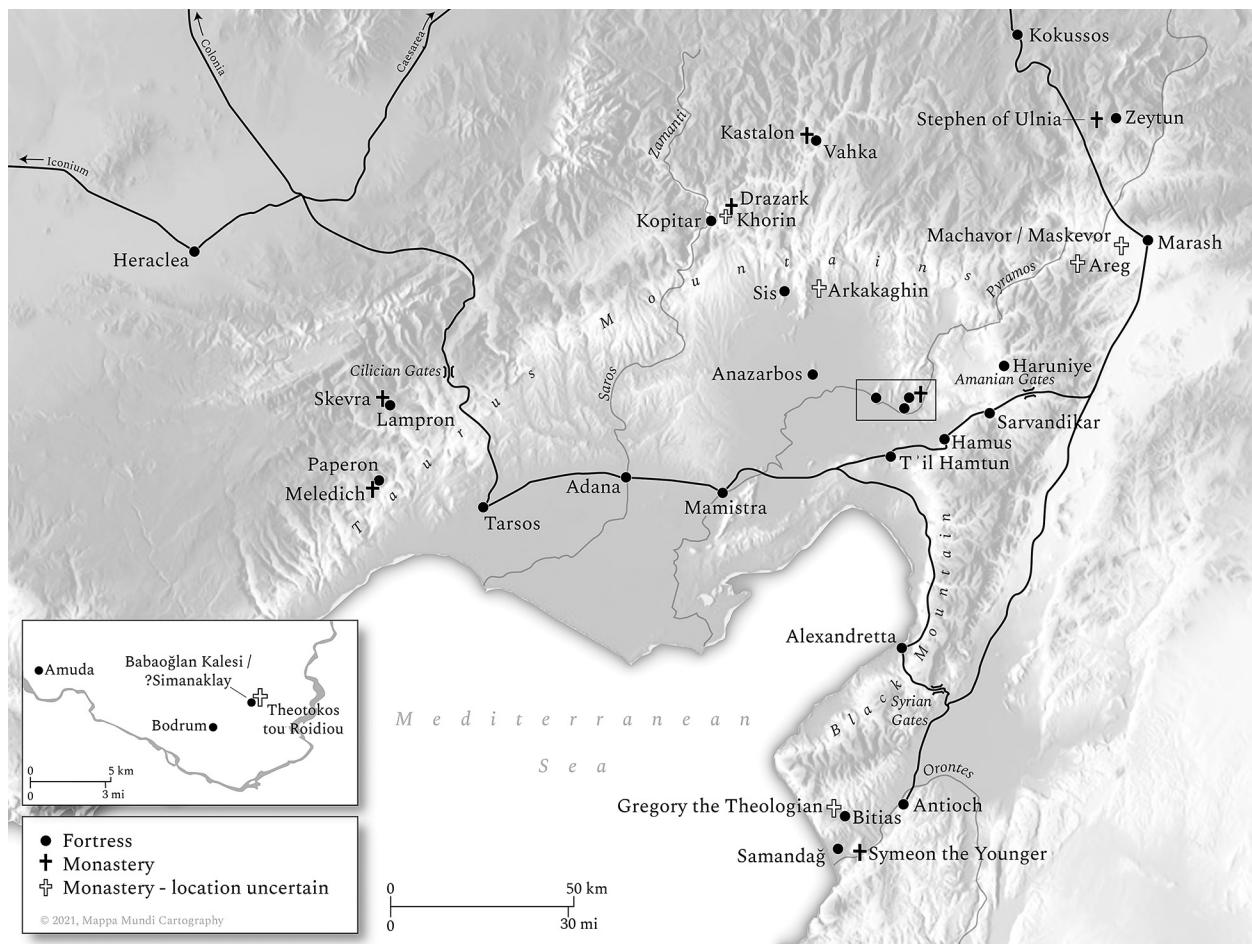


Fig. 2. Fortresses and monasteries in Cilicia, eleventh and twelfth centuries. Map by Mappa Mundi Cartography

sufficient precision in the same area, around Anazarbos (see fig. 2).⁵⁴

Given the perfect chronological correlation between Nikon's letters and Matthew of Edessa's chronicle, the link between the Greek and Armenian sources becomes evident: Marapas was the Byzantine governor/magistros and archon of archons of a province in Cilicia, gradually occupied in the last years of the eleventh century by the first Rubenids. Marapas kept his function long enough that his name was preserved for a while as

⁵⁴ See also Alishan, *Sissouan*, 167 and 277; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 342; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:399. Nicholas Adonz has opined that "Maraba" is a false reading of "Daraba," which could be identified with the plural *durūb* of the Arabic *durb*, which means "gate" or "passage;" see N. Adonz, "Notes arméno-byzantines," *Byzantion* 10 (1935): 161–203, at 200. As the name Marapas is used by Nikon, Adonz's hypothesis has lost its value.

that of the region he had ruled. It is not excluded that, even if for only a while, Anazarbos was Marapas's main fortress, which would perfectly justify the titles used by Nikon. Indeed, Anazarbos was a fortress comparable to Tarsos and Marash, where the title of archon of archons is attested in that period for Krakurtas and Tatul, respectively. The question remains open, however, since there is no clear evidence on the rulers of Anazarbos after 1084. Before this date, Philaretos Brachamios, duke of Antioch, controlled the fortress and the whole region.⁵⁵ At some point between 1084 and 1097, the

⁵⁵ Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* 15.4 (J.-B. Chabot, trans., *Michel le Syrien, Chronique*, 3 vols. [Paris, 1899–1905], 3:173). On Philaretos Brachamios and his control of Cilicia, see J.-C. Cheynet, "Les Brachamios," in J.-C. Cheynet and J.-F. Vannier, *Études prosopographiques, Byzantina Sorbonensis* 5 (Paris, 1986), 75–115, repr. J.-C. Cheynet, *La société byzantine: L'apport des sceaux*, Bilans de

Seljuks became the leaders of Cilicia, including its main fortresses⁵⁶ and the region where Nikon lived.⁵⁷ It appears that the Latins briefly captured this stronghold during the First Crusade.⁵⁸ The Armenians seized Anazarbos later, between 1114 and 1117.⁵⁹

Returning to the name Marapas/Marabas, it is worth noting that it is particularly unusual for Greek and Armenian persons. The name derives from the Syriac Mar (saint) Abhai, and undoubtedly refers to a Syriac Melkite in the service of the Byzantines.⁶⁰ Abhai had become a popular saint at that time and an important West Syrian monastery dedicated to him, also called the Monastery of the Ladders, is attested in the eleventh and twelfth centuries in the region of Gargar/Karkar, near Melitene.⁶¹

This Syriac background of Marapas is not surprising. In Cilicia, West Syrian metropolitans of Tarsos and Anazarbos are often attested in the late eleventh century, suggesting the existence of a Syriac-speaking population in these towns.⁶² One of the metropolitans of Anazarbos, Basil, appointed between 1074 and 1075, even came from the monastery Mar Abhai, already mentioned.⁶³

recherche 3, 2 vols. (Paris, 2008), 2:377–412, at 390–410, no. 13; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:88–90, 307–19; A. D. Beihammer, *Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia, ca. 1040–1130*, BBOS 20 (London, 2017), 285–86, 301, n. 122.

56 Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* 15.6 (Chabot 3:179). See Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:338–40; Beihammer, *Byzantium*, 291–93.

57 Nikon, *Taktikon* 4 (Hannick 1:206).

58 Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle* 2.113 (Dostourian, *Armenia and the Crusades*, 166–67). See Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 66–67.

59 Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:442–45. On Anazarbos, see also M. Gough, “Anazarbus,” *Anatolian Studies* 2 (1952): 85–150, at 98; Hellenkemper, *Burgen*, 191–201; Edwards, *Fortifications*, 65–72; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 178–85.

60 Todt, *Region*, 1:442–43; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:171. On Mar Abhai, see J. M. Fiey, *Saints syriaques*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 6 (Princeton, 2004), 22–23, no. 14.

61 Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* 15.3 (Chabot 3:170, 246–48); *Chronicle of 1234* 260 (J.-B. Chabot, ed., *Chronicon ad annum Christi 1234 pertinens*, 2 vols., CSCO 81–82, Scriptores Syri 36–37 [Leuven, 1916], 2:67; J.-B. Chabot and A. Abouna, trans., 2 vols., CSCO 109, 354, Scriptores Syri 56, 154 [Leuven, 1965, 1974], 2:50). See E. Honigmann, *Le couvent de Barṣaumā et le patriarchat jacobite d’Antioche et de Syrie*, CSCO 146, Subsidia 7 (Leuven, 1954), 81–82.

62 J. M. Fiey, *Pour un Oriens Christianus novus: Répertoire des diocèses syriaques orientaux et occidentaux*, Beiruter Texte und Studien 49 (Stuttgart, 1993), 166 (Anazarbos), 271 (Tarsos).

63 Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle*, Appendix 3.36.1 (Chabot 3:474).

The Syriac Melkites were probably also numerous; their number grew permanently after the Byzantine reconquest of the eastern provinces of the Empire. As the Greek presence appears to have been limited to the military and ecclesiastical elite, the terms “Greek” and “Melkite” used at that time also referred to the Syrians and Arabs of Chalcedonian confession.⁶⁴ Indeed, not only the Marapai/Marabai but also the Marachai, already mentioned,⁶⁵ and the Marchapsaboi were all of Syriac origin. Marchapsabos (*Μαρχαψάβος*) comes from another Syriac saint, Mar/Bar Habsabba.⁶⁶ The name was known in the Byzantine milieu: Barypsabas (*Βαρύψαβας*), the bearer of the blood of Christ according to a pious legend, was venerated in Constantinople in the tenth century.⁶⁷ Several Byzantine lead seals,

64 On this topic, see Todt, *Region*, 1:442–47; S. P. Brock, “Syriac Manuscripts Copied on the Black Mountain, near Antioch,” in *Lingua restituta orientalis: Festgabe für Julius Assfalg*, ed. R. Schulz and M. Görg, Ägypten und Altes Testament 20 (Wiesbaden, 1990), 59–67; J.-C. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963–1210)*, Byzantina Sorbonensis 9 (Paris, 1990), 394–96; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:168–72.

65 Alexandra-Kyriaki Wassiliou-Seibt has suggested a link between this family and Maraqa/Maraghah, a town situated 130 km south of Tabriz and 1,200 km east of Antioch, see Wassiliou-Seibt, *Corpus der byzantinischen Siegel* (see n. 30), 1:257.

66 N. Oikonomides, “Review of V. Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux de l’Empire byzantin*, V/3, Paris, 1972,” *Speculum* 49.4 (1974): 745–46; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:171. On Mar/Bar Habsabba, see Fiey, *Saints syriaques*, 18–19 (no. 8), 47–48 (nos. 75–76). West Syrian monasteries dedicated to Habsabba and Barhabsabba are attested, see *Documenta ad origines Monophysitarum illustrandas* (J.-B. Chabot, ed. and. trans., 2 vols., CSCO 17, 103, Scriptores Syri 17, 52 [Leuven, 1908, 1933], 1:171, trans. 2:119). On the Marchapsaboi, see Todt, *Region*, 1:446–47; J.-C. Cheynet, “Le culte de saint Jean-Baptiste en Cilicie et en Syrie,” in *Byzance et ses périphéries (Mondes grec, balkanique et musulman): Hommage à Alain Ducellier*, ed. B. Doumerc and C. Picard (Toulouse, 2004), 57–66, repr. Cheynet, *La société byzantine*, 1:323–30, at 324; idem, “Le contrôle de la Syrie du Nord à la fin de la seconde occupation byzantine (seconde moitié du XI^e siècle),” in *Bisanzio e le periferie dell’ Impero: Atti del Convegno Internazionale Catania, 26–28 novembre 2007*, ed. R. Gentile Messina (Rome, 2012), 41–57, at 45–46. Oikonomides has suggested Marqab/Marchapin (*Μαρχάπιν*), a small *kastron* between Laodicea and Tripoli, as a possible source for this name. This link is unlikely, however, as the *kastron* was only built by the Arabs in 1062; see E. Honigmann, *Die Ostgrenze des byzantinischen Reiches* (Brussels, 1935), 117; C. Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord à l’époque des croisades et la principauté franque d’Antioche*, Institut français de Damas, Bibliothèque orientale 1 (Paris, 1940), 171–72; Todt and Vest, *Syria*, 2:1495–99; N. Elißéeff, “al-Markab,” *EJP* 6:577–83.

67 See B. Lourié, “John II of Jerusalem’s Homily on the Encaenia of St. Sion and Its Calendrical Background,” in *Armenia between*

generally dating from the second half of the eleventh century, mention the name Marchapsabos and probably belong to members of the same family: Theodore, *strategos* of Tarsos and then Anazarbos;⁶⁸ Kyriakos, *protospatharios*;⁶⁹ Symeon, *protoproedros*;⁷⁰ Jean, *protospatharios epi tou Chrysotriklinou*, monk and *synkelos*;⁷¹ and Elpidios.⁷² It is not excluded that the Antiochitai, among whom John Antiochites was *strategos* of Anazarbos,⁷³ also had a Syriac background, since the epitaph of Nicholas Antiochites, who died at Mamistra in 1052, reveals the name of his father, Apolpharatzes, that is Abü al-Faradj.⁷⁴

The important positions occupied by Theodore Marchapsabos and John Antiochites as *strategoi* of Anazarbos⁷⁵ prove that, besides the Armenians, the

Byzantium and the Orient: Celebrating the Memory of Karen Yuzbashian (1927–2009), Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity 16, ed. B. Outtier, C. B. Horn, B. Lourié, and A. Ostrovsky (Leiden, 2020), 152–196, at 176–177 and nn. 70–72.

68 C. Sode, *Byzantinische Bleisiegel in Berlin*, vol. 2 (Bonn, 1997), 207–8, no. 385; J.-C. Cheynet and D. Theodoridis, *Sceaux byzantins de la collection D. Theodoridis: Les sceaux patronymiques*, Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, Monographies 33 (Paris, 2010), 146–49, nos. 135–38; C. Stavrakos, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel der Sammlung Savvas Kophopoulos: Eine Siegelsammlung auf der Insel Lesbos*, vol. 1 (Turnhout, 2010), 87–89, no. 4.1.4; Wassiliou-Seibt, *Corpus der byzantinischen Siegel*, 1:222 (no. 441), 1:261 (no. 554).

69 Cheynet, “Sceaux byzantins des musées d’Antioche et de Tarse” (see n. 33), 404, no. 22; Cheynet and Theodoridis, *Sceaux byzantins*, 142–44, no. 132.

70 Cheynet, Morrisson, and Seibt, *Les sceaux byzantins* (see n. 41), 52–53, no. 55.

71 Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux*, V (see n. 29), 3:45, no. 1678; Cheynet, “Sceaux byzantins des musées d’Antioche et de Tarse,” 436, no. 74; Cheynet and Theodoridis, *Sceaux byzantins*, 144–45, nos. 133–34; A.-K. Wassiliou-Seibt and W. Seibt, *Der byzantinische Mensch in seinem Umfeld: Weitere Bleisiegel der Sammlung Zarnitz im Museum August Kestner* (Rahden, Germany, 2015), 87–88, no. 58.

72 Cheynet, Morrisson, and Seibt, *Les sceaux byzantins*, 53.

73 J.-C. Cheynet, *Sceaux de la collection Zacos (Bibliothèque nationale de France) se rapportant aux provinces orientales de l’Empire byzantin* (Paris, 2001), 16–18, no. 3; A.-K. Wassiliou and W. Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel in Österreich*, vol. 2 (Vienna, 2004), 286–87, no. 300; Wassiliou-Seibt and Seibt, *Der byzantinische Mensch*, 100–102, no. 66.

74 G. Dagron and D. Feissel, *Inscriptions de Cilicie*, Travaux et mémoires du Centre de recherche d’histoire et civilisation de Byzance, Monographies 4 (Paris, 1987), 151–53, no. 96. On the Antiochitai, see Todt, *Region*, 1:444–45; Cheynet, “Le culte de saint Jean-Baptiste,” 324–26.

75 For a list of *strategoi* of Anazarbos in the eleventh century, see Cheynet, *Sceaux de la collection Zacos*, 16.

Syriac Melkites also played a significant role in Cilicia in the late eleventh century. Thanks to their new faith, these converted Syriacs rose to important positions in the Byzantine administration. The Marapai, and especially the governor or local leader Marapas mentioned by Nikon, must be placed within this general ethnic Cilician context.

Anazarbos

The now-confirmed location of the Roidion monastery in the wider region of Anazarbos should come as no surprise. Nikon was acquainted with the diocese of Anazarbos, where he had begun his ascetic career in the monastery founded by and under the guidance of Metropolitan Luke. Living again in Cilicia, Nikon still kept in close contact with the monks of his first monastery.⁷⁶ However, it remains to identify the position of the Roidion monastery more precisely.

To help us in this task, a third hint can be found in Nikon’s *Taktikon*. It refers to the pilgrim-oriented aspect of the monastery *tou Roidiou*. According to the typikon, its church and hospice (*xenodocheion*) had been founded and endowed with landed properties at the same time, so that both prayer and hospitality were supported.⁷⁷ A large part of the typikon’s dispositions regulate aspects linked to the activity of the hospice: the number of days foreigners could spend there,⁷⁸ the special treatment provided to dignitaries⁷⁹ and Franks (at least the second part of the typikon was written in the time of, or rather after, the First Crusade),⁸⁰ the meals and other facilities offered to visitors,⁸¹ and the dona-

76 Nikon, *Taktikon* 11 (Hannick 2:334–46). See Giankou, *Nίκων*, 108–9; Hannick, “Einleitung” (see n. 1), xlvi; Todt, *Region*, 2:932–33; Todt and Vest, *Syria*, 2:1829–30.

77 Nikon, *Taktikon* 2.2 (Hannick 1:138; R. Allison, trans., “Typikon of Nikon of the Black Mountain for the Monastery and Hospice of the Mother of God *tou Roidiou*,” in *BMFD* 1:425–39, at 430).

78 Nikon, *Taktikon* 2.8 (Hannick 1:142; Allison 432, [B2]).

79 Nikon, *Taktikon* 2.13 (Hannick 1:144; Allison 432, [B7]).

80 Nikon, *Taktikon* 2.9 (Hannick 1:142; Allison 432, [B3]). On this topic, see M. Levy-Rubin, “‘The Errors of the Franks’ by Nikon of the Black Mountain: Between Religious and Ethno-Cultural Conflict,” *Byzantium* 71 (2001): 422–37.

81 Nikon, *Taktikon* 2.8, 10, 14 (Hannick 1: 142–44; Allison 432–33, [B7], [B4], [B8]).

tions received by the hospice.⁸² The model that Nikon explicitly used for his typikon was the monastery of St. Symeon on the Wondrous Mount.⁸³ It is interesting to observe that the Franks could stay for only one day, although the general rule was three days. Therefore, we can infer that the monastery had not come under Latin control in the late eleventh century. Nikon also noted that he had already written in his letters about “the poor, the strangers, the friends, and the enemies” who came to the monastery.⁸⁴ In fact the number of guests exceeded the capacity of the hospice, and Nikon accepted that some of them would have to be lodged by monks privately, in their cells.⁸⁵ The visitors passed through the monastery traveling toward either Jerusalem or another destination,⁸⁶ which proves that it was not far from a major pilgrim road.

The pilgrimage routes from Constantinople to Antioch and Jerusalem have been extensively discussed. From Roman times, Cilicia was a main stop on the so-called Pilgrim’s Road.⁸⁷ In the medieval period, two major roads coming from Colonia (modern Aksaray) and Iconium (modern Konya) joined before crossing Cilicia.⁸⁸ Ranging from the Anatolian plateau to the Cilician plain, the route passed through the Cilician Gates (modern Gülek Boğazı). After Tarsos, Adana, and Mamistra, the pilgrims could choose either the northern branch, through the Amanian Gates (modern Bahçe Geçidi) or the southern one, through Alexandretta (modern İskenderun) and the Syrian Gates (modern Belen Geçidi).

In the eleventh century, Cilicia continued to be crossed by the foremost travelers; for instance, the monk

Lazaros of Mount Galesion⁸⁹ and the East Syrian physician and future monk Ibn Buṭlān.⁹⁰ The great German pilgrimage of 1064–1065 and an embassy of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos led by John Contostephanus, one century later,⁹¹ followed the same route. During the First Crusade, after reaching Heraclea (modern Ereğli), the main group of troops, led by Godfrey of Bouillon, passed north of Cilicia, through Caesarea (modern Kayseri), Comana (modern Sar), Kokussos (modern Göksun), and Marash, moving then to Antioch. However, two of the Crusade leaders, Tancred of Hauteville and Baldwin of Boulogne, entered Cilicia through the Cilician Gates and seized the country’s major fortresses, Tarsos, Adana, and Mamistra. Baldwin then rejoined the main army, marching northeast to Marash through the Amanian Gates (northern branch), while Tancred moved southwest to Alexandretta and Antioch through the Syrian Gates (southern branch).⁹²

Obviously, at that time there were other secondary military, pilgrim, and commercial routes that crossed Cilicia. But even if Tarsos, Adana, and Mamistra passed

89 *Life of Lazaros of Galesion* (see n. 40) 25 (Delehaye 517; Greenfield 109).

90 L. I. Conrad, “Ibn Buṭlān in Bilād al-Shām: The Career of a Travelling Christian Physician,” in Thomas, *Syrian Christians under Islam* (see n. 8), 131–57, at 144. On Ibn Buṭlān, see also J. Schacht, “Ibn Buṭlān,” *EP* 3:740–42; D. Oltean, “From Baghdad to Antioch and Constantinople: Ibn Buṭlān and the Byzantines,” *BZ* 114.1 (2021): 355–76.

91 A.-M. Talbot, “Byzantine Pilgrimage to the Holy Land from the Eighth to the Fifteenth Century,” in *The Sabaite Heritage in the Orthodox Church from the Fifth Century to the Present*, ed. J. Patrich, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 98 (Leuven, 2001), 97–110, at 104–5; D. Jacoby, “Bishop Gunther of Bamberg, Byzantium and Christian Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the Eleventh Century,” in *Zwischen Polis, Provinz und Peripherie: Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur*, ed. L. M. Hoffmann and A. Monchizadeh, *Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik* 7 (Wiesbaden, 2005), 267–85, at 279–80.

92 *Gesta Francorum* 4.10 (R. Hill, ed. and trans., *The Deeds of the Franks and the Other Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, Medieval Texts [Oxford, 1962], 24–25); *Gesta Tancredi* 34–45 (B. S. Bachrach and D. S. Bachrach, trans., *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph of Caen: A History of the Normans on the First Crusade*, Crusade Texts in Translation 12 (Aldershot, 2005), 57–70. See H. Hagenmeyer, *Chronologie de la première croisade (1094–1100)* (Paris, 1902), 95–101; J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London, 1986), 58–59, 160; C. Mutafian, “L’enjeu cilicien et les prétentions normandes (1097–1137),” in *Autour de la Première Croisade*, ed. M. Baland, *Byzantina Sorbonensis* 14 (Paris, 1996), 453–63; Asbridge, *Creation* (see n. 9), 16–24; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:403–6.

82 Nikon, *Taktikon* 2.21, 23 (Hannick 1:150–152; Allison 435–36, [B15], [B17]).

83 Nikon, *Taktikon* 2.4, 25 (Hannick 1:140, 154; Allison 431, 437, [A4], [B19]).

84 Nikon, *Taktikon* 2.1 (Hannick 1:136; Allison 429, [A1]).

85 Nikon, *Taktikon* 2.11 (Hannick 1:142; Allison 432, [B5]).

86 Nikon, *Taktikon* 2.8 (Hannick 1:142; Allison 432, [B5]).

87 D. French, *Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor*, vol. 1: *The Pilgrim’s Road*, BAR International Series 105 (Oxford, 1981), 13–14, 93–95; E. D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire, AD 312–460* (Oxford, 1982), 55–56, 65–66; P. Maraval, *Lieux saints et pèlerinages d’Orient: Histoire et géographie. Des origines à la conquête arabe* (Paris, 1985), 164–65, 353–56.

88 F. Hild and M. Restle, *Kappadokien*, *TIB* 2 (Vienna, 1981), 124–27; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 128–33.

from the hands of the Greeks to those of the Latins and back several times in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries,⁹³ the roads used by Tancred and Baldwin in Cilicia must have become the most secure ones for Western travelers. Two Latin archbishops ordained in 1099 for Tarsos and Mamistra consolidated the Western influence in the region.⁹⁴ The mention of the Franks in the typikon of Nikon indicates, with great probability, the proximity of the Roidion monastery to the main Cilician pilgrim road.

Given the foregoing points, the location of the monastery must be sought at the juncture between the country of Marapa(s)—that is, the region of Anazarbos—and this Cilician road, including its northern branch. Situated 50 km northeast of Mamistra, however, Anazarbos seems not to have been among the major pilgrim destinations. The region of Kopitar, the only fortress surely located in the country of Marapa(s), lies 120 km north of Mamistra, too far to be taken into consideration. Vahka, at the same distance, and the surrounding area must also be excluded. Under these constraints, Nikon's monastery had to be located either east or west of Anazarbos, not very far from the road that crossed the country from the Cilician to the Amanian Gates.

Simanaklay

Since the Roidion monastery benefited from a privileged position and pilgrims' gifts, there are reasons to suggest that it did not cease to exist in the twelfth century. Most likely it came under Armenian control, for two main reasons. First, as noted above, during the First Crusade the Latins did not seize the region where the monastery was. Second, the Greek monks, if they did not leave Cilicia altogether, had far less influence there. In this context, it is worth looking further for the monasteries that passed from Byzantine to Armenian control and survived during this shifting period.

The number of such monasteries mentioned in the sources is, however, limited. Kastalon (Gasdaghon), attested as the burial place of the first two Rubenids, may have been a Greek monastery before coming under

⁹³ *Gesta Tancredi* 143, 151 (Bachrach and Bachrach 158–59, 167). See Mutafian, “L’enjeu cilicien,” 457–59; Asbridge, *Creation*, 52, 56, 62–63; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:479–82, 2:680–83.

⁹⁴ *Gesta Tancredi* 140 (Bachrach and Bachrach 156); Asbridge, *Creation*, 45.

Armenian control, but it was situated near Vahka, far from any pilgrim road.⁹⁵ The monasteries called Drazark (probably modern Kırıslar)⁹⁶ and Khorin⁹⁷ had also followed the Greek rite in the early twelfth century since the monk Gevorg (George) Meghrik (d. 1113) introduced there the customary Armenian Sunday vigils according to the liturgical typikon of Jerusalem,⁹⁸ in opposition to the local practice and recommendations of Nikon, who followed the typikon of Constantinople on this matter.⁹⁹ In the mid-thirteenth century, liturgical manuscripts of Byzantine influence were still copied at Drazark.¹⁰⁰ Both monasteries can be located with sufficient precision close to Kopitar. Areg/Arek,¹⁰¹ the residence of the *catholico*s Gregory II the Martyrophile (1066–1105) in the early twelfth century, and Machavor/Maskevor,¹⁰² restored in 1111 by Thoros I, were two monasteries situated toward the Pyramos River, the eastern limit of the first Rubenids’ land, “at the foot of the Black Mountain,” but in the region of Marash. Arkakaghin, around Sis (modern Kozan),¹⁰³ where Thoros I brought an icon of the *Theotokos* in 1111, seems to be better placed but nothing is known about its contemporary religious life. In the same region, a Greek monastery is attested

⁹⁵ Alishan, *Sissouan*, 173; Dunbar and Boal, “Castle of Vahga” (see n. 52), 176 and n. 5; Edwards, *Fortifications*, 43–44, n. 23; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 295; M. Thierry, *Répertoire des monastères arméniens*, Corpus Christianorum (Turnhout, 1993), 3, no. 2; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:392–95.

⁹⁶ Alishan, *Sissouan*, 265–72; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 243; Thierry, *Répertoire*, 3 (no. 4), 6 (no. 23); Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:469–72; Grigoryan, “Location of Drazark” (see n. 51), 73–78.

⁹⁷ Alishan, *Sissouan*, 160–62; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 457; Thierry, *Répertoire*, 4, no. 8; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:469–72.

⁹⁸ Nikon, *Taktikon* 1.20 (Hannick 1:60; R. Allison, trans., “Regulations of Nikon of the Black Mountain,” in *BMFD* 1:377–424, at 390); Nikon, *Taktikon* 6.8 (Hannick 1:272).

⁹⁹ See Alishan, *Sissouan*, 151, 160; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:444–45.

¹⁰⁰ C. Renoux, “Une influence du rite byzantin sur la liturgie arménienne: Un pentécostaire arménien,” in *L’Arménie et Byzance*, Byzantina Sorbonensis 12 (Paris, 1996), 187–90, at 190.

¹⁰¹ Alishan, *Sissouan*, 209–10; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 196; Thierry, *Répertoire*, 57, no. 303; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 2:745.

¹⁰² Alishan, *Sissouan*, 63, 488–89; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 344; Thierry, *Répertoire*, 168, no. 939; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:446–47.

¹⁰³ Alishan, *Sissouan*, 293–95; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 197; Thierry, *Répertoire*, 6, no. 22; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 1:474–76.

in 1259,¹⁰⁴ but the link with Arkakaghin is obviously uncertain. Skevra¹⁰⁵ and Meledich,¹⁰⁶ two monasteries related to the Hethumids' fortresses Lampron (modern Çamliyayla) and Paperon (modern Gözne) respectively, could be dated to the late eleventh century. But both belonged to the region of Tarsos, and had no links with the region of Marapa(s). Some other Greek-Armenian monasteries situated in Cilicia were too far from Anazarbos to warrant discussion here.¹⁰⁷

The only known Cilician monastery of that period that deserves further attention is Simanaklay. Metropolitan Nerses of Lampron (1153–1198) visited it in 1179 and found there the Greek version of the *Life* of Benedict by Gregory the Great, as well as many other Greek manuscripts. The joy of Nerses was boundless, “as those who experienced the love of science (which is the same as the love of God) will understand.”¹⁰⁸ Yet how could the existence of this Greek library be explained? It is hard to imagine that these books were brought from another place during the twelfth century. The short Byzantine occupations of Cilicia in that period seem to have had no notable influence on monastic life. If Greek monks had wanted to move and protect their books, they would have chosen a safer place. An Armenian transfer of Greek books is even more doubtful. It is, therefore, appropriate to assume that the library housed a treasure established during the previous century. Simanaklay was probably a Byzantine monastery before it became an Armenian one.

The position of this monastery is relatively well known. Nerses of Lampron placed it “close to Anazarbos.” There is no additional information about the monastery, but we are better informed regarding the fortress with the same name, Simanaklay, which obviously must have been situated very close. In the

104 Todt, *Region*, 2:937.

105 Alishan, *Sissouan*, 103–15; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 417; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 2:687–88.

106 Alishan, *Sissouan*, 76–77; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 351; Thierry, *Répertoire*, 55, no. 291; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 2:687–88.

107 See Todt, *Region*, 2:937; J. J. S. Weitenberg, “The Armenian Monasteries in the Black Mountain,” in *East and West in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean* (see n. 17), 79–93.

108 Weitenberg, “Armenian Monasteries,” 89–90. See also R. W. Thomson, “Introduction,” in Nerses of Lambron, *Commentary on the Revelation of Saint John*, Hebrew University Armenian Studies 9, trans. R. W. Thomson (Leuven, 2007), 18, n. 82; Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 2:794 and n. 3.

thirteenth-century chronicle attributed to Smbat the Constable, this castle is mentioned among the first reconquests of the Armenian prince Thoros II (1145–1169), beside Vahka and Amuda (Hemite Kalesi, modern Gökçedam, 20 km east of Anazarbos).¹⁰⁹ The Anazarbos region had come under Byzantine control after the campaign of Emperor John II Komnenos in 1137.¹¹⁰ According to the Syriac *Chronicle of 1234*, after 1175 the widow of the Armenian prince Mleh I (1170–1175) became the new owner of the fortress.¹¹¹ Simanaklay is also mentioned in the so-called coronation list of 1198/1199, the listing of vassals attending the coronation ceremony of Lewon II (1187–1219), the founder of the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia.¹¹² On that list, Simanaklay follows the fortresses Hamus (Gavur Kalesi, modern Çardak, 5 km east of Osmaniye and 40 km southeast of Anazarbos),¹¹³ Sarvandikar (Savuran Kale, near modern Kıraklı, 10 km southwest of the Amanian Gates),¹¹⁴ and Haruniye (ancient Eirenopolis, modern Düziçi, 10 km northwest of the Amanian Gates and 15 km north of Sarvandikar),¹¹⁵ and precedes Ane (near Zeytun, modern Süleymanlı, 50 km north of Marash).¹¹⁶ The first three fortresses were located in Eastern Cilicia.

109 On Amuda, see Hellenkemper, *Burgen*, 123–31; Edwards, *Fortifications*, 58–62; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 176–77.

110 Smbat the Constable, *Chronicle* (manuscript of Etchmiadzin) (É. Dulaurier, ed. and trans., *Recueil des historiens des croisades, Documents arméniens*, 1:610–80 [Paris, 1869], at 618).

111 *Chronicle of 1234* (see n. 61) 459 (Chabot 2:177.12; Abouna 2:133).

112 Smbat the Constable, *Chronicle* (manuscript of Etchmiadzin) (Dulaurier 636); Smbat the Constable, *Chronicle* (manuscript of Venice) (G. Dédéyan, trans., *La chronique attribuée au Connétable Smbat. Documents relatifs à l'histoire des croisades publiés par l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 13 [Paris, 1980], 76). See also S. L. Grigoryan, “Koronatsionnyy spisok Letopisi Smbata Gundstablya: Sirui, vladetel' Simanakly (The Coronation List of the Chronicle Attributed to Smbat the Constable: Siruhi, Prince of Simanakla),” *Patma-Banasirakan Handes* (The Historical-Philological Journal) 3 (2012): 198–210.

113 Hellenkemper, *Burgen*, 108–10; Edwards, *Fortifications*, 110–13; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 269.

114 Hellenkemper, *Burgen*, 111–15; Edwards, *Fortifications*, 216–21; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 396.

115 Hellenkemper, *Burgen*, 116–19; Edwards, *Fortifications*, 143–47; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 245–48.

116 Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 187.

More precisely, Simanaklay is mentioned in the *Diploma* of Lewon II for the Teutonic knights in 1212, which placed the fortress near Amuda.¹¹⁷ This latter castle was included in the eastern Cilician network of fortifications that defended the strategic roads from Anazarbos and Adana toward the Amanian Gates. The network included the fortresses Hamus, Sarvandikar, and Haruniye, already mentioned, as well as Bodrum (ancient Hierapolis/Kastabala, modern Kesmeburun, 10 km southeast of Amuda and 15 km northwest of Osmaniye),¹¹⁸ and T'il Hamtun (modern Toprakkale, 10 km west of Osmaniye).¹¹⁹ According to Hansgerd Hellenkemper, the exact location of Simanaklay is the fortress Babaoğlan Kalesi (modern Kazmaca),¹²⁰ situated 35 km east of Anazarbos and 15 km east of Amuda, an opinion accepted by Michel Thierry¹²¹ but rejected by Robert Edwards as “purely speculative.”¹²²

The position of Simanaklay, close to Amuda and therefore to the main Cilician road toward the Amanian Gates, raises the question of an identity between the monastery with the same name, mentioned by Nerses of

Lampron, and the Roidion monastery. Four arguments favor this suggestion.

First, there is at least one common element between the monastery of Nikon and Simanaklay: the Greek version of the *Life of Benedict* by Gregory the Great. Before Nerses noted its existence at Simanaklay, Nikon knew and used it, for he cited the second book of Gregory's *Dialogues* containing this text on three occasions in his letters.¹²³ Both Nikon's¹²⁴ and Simanaklay's libraries, therefore, had copies of this book.

Second, the Roidion monastery and Simanaklay were part of the same monastic network. Nerses wrote that he had found the *Life of Benedict* not only at Simanaklay but also in a Greek monastery situated near Bitias (modern Batiyaz/Teknepinar), 15 km southwest of Antioch and 10 km north of the monastery of St. Symeon the Thaumaturgos. It seems that Simanaklay, this monastery of Bitias, and the monastery of St. Symeon all belonged to the same monastic circle, which facilitated the circulation of manuscripts among them.¹²⁵ However, the same thing could be said about the Roidion monastery, Bitias, and St. Symeon the Thaumaturgos. The connection between the first and third of these is assured by Nikon. Based on the similarity of the terms “Bitias” and “Pithaion,”

¹¹⁷ V. Langlois, *Le Trésor des Chartes d'Arménie ou Cartulaire de la chancellerie royale des Roupeniens* (Venice, 1863), 117–20, at 118, no. 6; E. Strehlke, *Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici ex tabulari regii berolinensis codice potissimum* (Berlin, 1869), 37–39, at 37, no. 46. See Alishan, *Sissouan*, 224–27. On the fortresses of the Teutonic order in Armenian Cilicia, see K. Forstreuter, *Der deutsche Orden am Mittelmeer*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens 2 (Bonn, 1967), 234; J. Riley-Smith, “The Templars and the Teutonic Knights in Cilician Armenia,” in *The Cilician Kingdom of Armenia*, ed. T. Boase (Edinburgh, 1978), 92–117, at 111–15; M.-A. Chevalier, “Les forteresses des ordres militaires en Arménie: Un atout indispensable dans l'accomplissement de leur mission,” in *Castelos das Ordens Militares*, ed. I. C. Ferreira Fernandes, vol. 2 (Lisbon, 2013), 205–25, at 208–9, 215–16. The donation of the castle to the Teutonic order was confirmed in 1213 by Pope Innocent III; see Langlois, *Le Trésor des Chartes*, 121, no. 7; Strehlke, *Tabulae*, 39–40, no. 47.

¹¹⁸ Hellenkemper, *Burgen*, 137–39; Edwards, *Fortifications*, 92–94; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 293–94.

¹¹⁹ Hellenkemper, *Burgen*, 140–53; Edwards, *Fortifications*, 244–53; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 445–47.

¹²⁰ Hellenkemper, *Burgen*, 135–36; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 411.

¹²¹ Thierry, *Répertoire*, 4, no. 11.

¹²² Edwards, *Fortifications*, 84–87. The author has assumed, however, that Babaoglan was first a Byzantine site later occupied by the Armenians (n. 6). On Simanaklay, see also Alishan, *Sissouan*, 227–28. On Babaoglan, see also D. Vandekerckhove, *Medieval Fortifications in Cilicia: The Armenian Contribution to Military Architecture in the Middle Ages*, History of Warfare 128 (Leiden, 2020), 109–10 and 147b.

¹²³ Nikon, *Taktikon* 3.13 (Hannick 1:170), 14.44 (1:394), 18.8 (1:510). See O. Delouis, “Saint Benoît de Nursie à Byzance,” in *Interactions, emprunts, confrontations chez les religieux*, ed. S. Excoffon, D.-O. Hurel, and A. Peters-Custot, *Antiquité tardive–fin du XIX^e siècle* (Saint-Étienne, 2015), 73–92, at 89–90. The Greek translation of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* by Pope Zacharias (741–752) had circulated in the Orient from the ninth century at the latest. It could have reached Antioch via Mount Athos, where the *Rule of Benedict*, also mentioned by Nerses of Lampron, was already known in the late tenth century. See Delouis, “Saint Benoît de Nursie,” 77–85. On the translations of Benedict's *Life* and *Rule* by Nerses of Lampron, see I. Havener, “The Prologue to the *Rule of Benedict*,” *Journal of the Society of Armenian Studies* 3 (1987): 35–62.

¹²⁴ There is no reason to doubt that Nikon brought his library with him when he moved to the Roidion monastery. Christodoulos of Patmos manifested similar care for his books when he moved to the island of Patmos; see *Testament of Christodoulos of Patmos*, *Codicil* (MM, ed., 6:81–90, at 87; P. Karlin-Hayter, trans., “Rule, Testament and Codicil of Christodoulos for the Monastery of St. John the Theologian on Patmos,” in *BMFD*, 2:594–601, at 599, [C6], [C7]).

¹²⁵ At Bitias, Nerses also enjoyed discovering Andreas of Caesarea's *Commentary of the Apocalypse of John*, another book known by Nikon, given that he wrote about it; see Weitenberg, “Armenian Monasteries,” 90–91; Thomson, “Introduction,” 17–18; Nikon, *Taktikon* 13.10 (Hannick 1:364).

Klaus-Peter Todt has suggested¹²⁶ that there was also a special link between Nikon and a monastery of Bitias, since one of Nikon's letters, written after 1088/1089, was addressed πρὸς τοὺς Πιθαϊώτας ἀδελφούς¹²⁷ living in the diocese of Seleucia Pieria (the town lay 15 km southwest of Bitias).¹²⁸ A member of this community, named Symeon, visited Nikon and his monastery.¹²⁹ It is not excluded that the addressees of Nikon's letter were the monks of St. Gregory the Theologian in Bitias, a Melkite monastery attested in the tenth century.¹³⁰ Given these considerations, Bitias and the monastery of St. Symeon the Thaumaturgos appear to be well connected with both the Roidion monastery and Simanaklay, which could support the existence of a relationship between these last two.

Third, a special connection between a monastery called Klay and St. Symeon the Thaumaturgos is attested by a certain monk Gregory, the translator of the *Life* of Stephen of Ulnia into Armenian in the late eleventh century. In his prologue, Gregory mentions that he left his monastery dedicated to this saint, situated in the region of Zeytun,¹³¹ and traveled in search of the original Greek text, first at Klay and then at the monastery of St. Symeon, before finding it in Constantinople:

Then someone informed me that the Greeks have their history [i.e., the *Life* of Stephen]. And I hastened and came to the monastery which is called Klay, and I asked very inquisitively about their history but they said to me: We don't have it but perhaps [it is] in the monastery of St. Symeon. I set out right away for the monastery and again I asked them and they were

ignorant [about it] and said to me: We don't have it but perhaps [they have it] in Constantinople.¹³²

Sergio La Porta has proposed that we identify this monastery called Klay with Simanaklay, since no other monastery ending its name with "klay," i.e., "fortress," is attested in that period.¹³³ If this is true, Simanaklay and St. Symeon the Thaumaturgos appear to emerge as the richest Greek libraries of the region. Thus a special connection between them can once again be imagined.

Finally, Simanaklay draws our attention because of its name. Simanaklay (Սիմանակլայ), from Simana (Սիմանա) and klay (կլայ), means "fortress of Symeon." While the monastery (and its library) already existed in the late eleventh century and the castle is attested from the mid-twelfth century, it is not very clear whether this Symeon lived under the Byzantine or the Armenian rule of the region. At first glance the latter seems more likely, but the owner or builder of the fortress must be sought before 1137, when the castle's name is already attested. Gérard Dédéyan has suggested identifying Symeon with the holder of a fortress (probably Agrustopolis/Augoustopolis, modern Niğde) between Heraclea and Caesarea, who offered his services to the Crusaders in 1097.¹³⁴ The custom of giving a citadel the name of its builder or owner was not unusual in Cilicia. For example, Haruniye, already mentioned, was built in the time of the Abbasid caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (786–809), who gave it his name. In the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia, the best-known examples are the fortresses Smbataklay, the castle of Smbat the Constable, brother of King Hethum I (1226–1269),¹³⁵ and Lewonklay, built by Lewon III (1269–1289) in 1272.¹³⁶

126 Todt, *Region*, 2:930–31; Todt and Vest, *Syria*, 2:1582.

127 Nikon, *Taktikon* 20 (Hannick 1:586).

128 Nikon, *Taktikon* 20.12 (Hannick 1:594).

129 Nikon, *Taktikon* 20.1 (Hannick 1:586).

130 *Life of Christopher of Antioch* 22 (H. Zayat, ed. and trans., "Vie du patriarche melkite d'Antioche Christophe († 967) par le protospathe Ibrahim b. Yuhanna. Document inédit du X^e siècle," *PrOC* 2 [1952]: 11–38, 333–66, at 364–65). On Bitias, see also Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Itinéraires* (see n. 2), 47–49; Djebadze, *Archaeological Investigations* (see n. 2), 176–77.

131 Alishan, *Sissouan*, 227–28; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 285; Thierry, *Répertoire*, 55–56, no. 295.

132 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, arm. 178, ff. 3v–4r. See also L. Alishan, *Vark' ew vkayabanut iwnk' srbots'* (Lives and Martyrdoms of the Saints), vol. 2 (Venice, 1874), 322. Trans. S. La Porta, "Back to Byzantium: An Armenian Monk's Worlding of the Byzantine Frontier," in *Foreign Monks in Byzantium: Migration Trends and Integration Policies in Religious Context* (Leuven), forthcoming.

133 I thank Sergio La Porta for his suggestions on this topic.

134 Dédéyan, *Les Arméniens*, 2:650–55. See *Gesta Francorum* (see n. 92) 4.11 (Hill, *The Deeds of the Franks*, 25); Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere* (J. H. Hill and L. L. Hill, trans. [Philadelphia, 1974], 40). See also Hagenmeyer, *Chronologie* (see n. 92), 95–96.

135 Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 418.

136 Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 333; S. Grigoryan, "Named for Lewon the Young: The Medieval Name and the Date of Construction of Yilankale," *REArm* 37 (2016–17): 213–24. On this topic, see also

In the case of Simanaklay, however, this custom can hardly be applied. The Symeon proposed by Dédéyan was a minor local noble, a temporary owner, and not a builder, ruler, king, or influential person who could have imposed his name on the castle. Moreover, there is no evidence that another important person called Symeon lived in this region before 1037. Taking into consideration the troubled times and the region's insecurity, it is very difficult to imagine a local leader who would have enough resources to build a new fortress. This line of thinking also applies to the Byzantine period, when it was usual for only emperors, patriarchs, or eminent persons to give their names to newly built towns, monasteries, or fortresses.

This impasse can be satisfactorily resolved if it is assumed that Simanaklay results not from the name of the castle or its owner but from the name of the monastery, which already existed in the late eleventh century. In this case, the latter must have been known as the monastery of St. Symeon. This kind of influence would not be unique. The popular saints sometimes gave their names to cities, mounts, or landmarks. For instance, the monastery of St. Symeon Stylite the Elder near Aleppo became in Arabic Qal'at Sim'ān, "the fortress of Symeon."¹³⁷ The mountain around St. Symeon the Elder's complex is still called Jabal Sim'ān, "the mountain of Symeon," while the name of the town Samandağ near Antioch comes from the Turkish Seman Dağ, which also means "the mountain of Symeon" and refers this time to the Wondrous Mount.

In our case, Symeon must refer to St. Symeon Stylite the Younger, who enjoyed greater popularity in this region than his namesake St. Symeon the Elder during the Byzantine occupation of Antioch. In this new light, Simanaklay was initially a Greek monastery dedicated to St. Symeon the Thaumaturgos. However, a Cilician monastery under the patronage of this saint and well-connected with the powerful monastery of St. Symeon on the Wondrous Mount could be viewed as a *metochion*, a subordinate monastery, or even a sister monastery of the latter. No other likely connection

Hellenkemper, *Burgen*, 293–94; Hild and Hellenkemper, *Kilikien*, 280 (Jofrēklay), 351 (Mixaylkay).

¹³⁷ On this fortress, see J.-L. Biscop, "The 'Kastron' of Qal'at Sim'ān," in *Muslim Military Architecture in Greater Syria: From the Coming of Islam to the Ottoman Period*, ed. H. Kennedy, History of Warfare 35 (Leiden, 2006), 75–83.

between the two monasteries is attested in the region of Antioch, but some evidence can be found in other provinces of the Empire. The best-known example is the monastery Lavra of Mount Athos, founded by Athanasios around 963, which possessed a metochion in Constantinople in the late tenth century, led by Anthony, Athanasios's favorite disciple. After the death of Athanasios, this metochion was organized as a monastery and became known as the monastery of Panagiou.¹³⁸ The same type of relationship may then have existed between the Roidion monastery and St. Symeon the Thaumaturgos. Ibn Buṭlān, who visited Symeon's sanctuary near Antioch in the mid-eleventh century, did not restrain his admiration regarding this monastery: it was half as large as the palace of the caliph in Baghdad and its yearly revenue amounted to 400,000 dinars.¹³⁹ This wealth was based on land properties and dependencies, of which the Roidion monastery may have been one.

This supposition would help to clarify many of the uncertain aspects discussed in this paper: (1) The fact that Nikon did not sign his letters as hegoumenos, but on the contrary felt the need to have the Patriarchate reconfirm his leadership, suggests once again the subordinate relationship between his community and the mother monastery. (2) The growth of the library of the Roidion monastery / Simanaklay, well connected with other monastic libraries near Antioch, could also be better understood. (3) Given that monks from the monastery of St. Symeon the Thaumaturgos often traveled to Constantinople in the late eleventh century,¹⁴⁰ a Cilician metochion situated close to the main strategic and pilgrim road was therefore not only possible but perhaps even necessary. Keeping in mind the pilgrim-oriented dimension of the Roidion monastery and the importance of its xenodocheion, it seems that the residence of Nikon is the best candidate for this

¹³⁸ See J. Leroy, "Les deux vies de S. Athanase l'Athonite," *AB* 82 (1964): 409–29, at 413–15.

¹³⁹ Ibn al-Qiftī, *History of Learned Men* (J. Lippert, ed. [Leipzig, 1903], 294–315, at 297; J. Schacht and M. Meyerhof, trans., *The Medico-Philosophical Controversy between Ibn Buṭlān of Bagdad and Ibn Ridwān of Cairo: A Contribution to the History of Greek Learning among the Arabs*, Egyptian University, Faculty of Arts, Publication 13 [Cairo, 1937], 51–59, at 56).

¹⁴⁰ The case of some monks from the Wondrous Mount who came to Constantinople demanding Psellos's support is suggestive; see Michael Psellos, *Letters* 7 (S. Papaioannou, ed., *Michael Psellus Epistulae*, Teubner, 2 vols. [Berlin, 2019], 1:12–14).

dependency. (4) In his typikon, Nikon used the model of the monastery of St. Symeon on the Wondrous Mount not only because he had lived there but also because his new monastery had a special connection with the previous one. (5) The seal of Symeon Marapas/Marachas, found in Cyprus, already discussed, could contain the image of St. Symeon the Styliste because the Roidion monastery, situated in the region ruled by a Marapas, had St. Symeon as its patron saint. (6) Finally, as a mixed Greek-Armenian community, the monastery of Nikon was probably known under two different names. The Greeks mostly called it the monastery of the Theotokos tou Roidiou, without using the name of Symeon, reserved for his monastery on the Wondrous Mount. The Armenians, however, retained the name of its patron and began to call both the monastery and the castle located nearby Simanaklay.

In this context, the last years of Nikon's life become more understandable. Nikon moved from the main monastery of St. Symeon Styliste near Antioch to one of its dependencies located in the region of Anazarbos. He did not become its hegoumenos, but only its spiritual leader. Even though Nikon moved from one monastery to another, he remained within the same ecclesiastical and monastic network, allowing him to keep in close contact with old acquaintances and continue his activities of teaching and explaining Church doctrine. Living in a region populated mostly by Armenians but in contact with the Seljuks and then Crusaders, Nikon's mixed Greek-Armenian community had to adapt to the new conditions. After his death, the castle and the monastery, both known as Simanaklay, became strategic places for the Armenian princes, the most powerful masters of the region for a long time.



At the end of this long series of deductions and suppositions, the Roidion monastery remains shadowed in mystery. However, its location is now easier to see. Its customary placement on the Black Mountain can

be accepted, but with the addition that the monastery was positioned on the western side of the mountains, in Eastern Cilicia. Nikon's writings reveal its proximity to the main Cilician road that crossed the country from the Cilician to the Amanian Gates.

There is no clear evidence about the monastery's exact location. It is not excluded that new data will be discovered; for instance, new seals of the Marapai may be revealed or new Greek or Armenian documents and inscriptions may be brought to light. Until then, however, Simanaklay, situated in Eastern Cilicia, near Amuda (Hemite Kalesi/Gökçedam), attested in the twelfth century, perfectly accords with all conditions required for the location of Nikon's monastery. The Theotokos tou Roidiou/Simanaklay, a Byzantine monastery before becoming an Armenian one, was probably a metochion of Nikon's previous dwelling, the monastery of Symeon the Younger on the Wondrous Mount.

The last years of Nikon's life and the transformation of his monastery into an Armenian one shed light on the fate of Byzantine Cilician monasteries in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Abandoned by the Greek monks, they served as the first religious installations of the new Armenian rulers of the region. For a while, Greeks and Chalcedonian Armenians lived together at the Roidion monastery, as well as at Drazark and Khorin, where the Armenian rite progressively replaced the Greek one. From the twelfth century onwards, the Chalcedonian traditions were gradually abandoned and forgotten, while the Armenian princes tried to impose their ancient faith and religious customs. The survival of Simanaklay's Greek library until the late twelfth century is one of the few testimonies of this ethnic and religious change.

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 THE RESEARCH LEADING TO THE PUBLICATION of this paper was supported by the Research Foundation-Flanders (FWO) within the framework of the project "Integrating Outsiders, Preserving

Identity: Byzantine Policies on Foreign Monks (Ninth to Twelfth Centuries)." I would like to thank the anonymous readers for their invaluable suggestions, which helped to improve the manuscript.